REMARKS

The foregoing Amendment contains no new matter and further clarifies the invention prior to Examination.

Claims 12-16 and 18-22, cancelled in this Preliminary Amendment, have been allowed in the parent application, Serial Number 09/267,449 for which a Notice of Allowance was issued on August 19, 2003. Claims 17 and 23 are also cancelled in this Preliminary Amendment.

The following arguments are presented in response to the rejection of these claims as set forth in the First Office Action to the parent application.

Independent claims 1 and 7 have been rejected by the Examiner as being obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,548,646 to Aziz et al. in combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,122,372 to Hughs. Applicant acknowledges that Aziz teaches the interception of data packets.

However, Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's argument that Aziz teaches a processed packet store. The stored information referenced by the Examiner in column 4, lines 31-45, does not refer to the storage of the intercepted packets, but instead refers to a lookup table used to determine whether the to encrypt the intercepted packet based on the sending and destination computers for the packet (as indicated by the packet header). Aziz does not teach the storage of the transmitted packets.

Further, while the Examiner correctly points out that Hughes teaches the use of a hash algorithm to generate a hash value for the currently intercepted packet, Hughes does not teach that the hash value for the current packet is based on the hash value of a previous packet. This is an important aspect of the invention since it not only allows that recipient to verify that the packet is authentic, but also that the sequence of packets has remained intact (for instance that no packets have been deleted).